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ABSTRACT

After an analysis of 1990 Philippines National Statistics Office data showed a high incidence of illiteracy among women in the fishing villages, a project, Community Learning Approach (CLA), was developed to raise the literacy level. It was designed as an alternative delivery system of educating women in 24 villages for functional literacy and organizing themselves for empowerment to undertake livelihood projects to augment their income. Components were the following: assessment of the clientele on their socioeconomic status; development and translation of literacy instructional materials; recruitment and training of functional literacy facilitators; organization and conduct of functional literacy classes; livelihood skills training; organization for community development; and monitoring and evaluation. Assessment of clientele showed that more than one-half were housekeepers and fish vendors living in extreme poverty. Advocacy and social mobilization were done with active involvement and assistance of local government and other agencies. Content of literacy classes included health and sanitation, family life, child care, nutrition and food preparation, and food production. Community learning centers where classes were conducted were set up. Almost one-half of project graduates had their own livelihood projects, such as dressmaking, bag making, snack preparation, and buying and selling. (Seven data tables are appended.) (YLB)

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Community Learning Approach (CLA) for Literacy Promotion of Women in the Fishing Villages of Region I (Philippines)

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
Region I
San Fernando, La Union

COMMUNITY LEARNING APPROACH (CLA) FOR LITERACY PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN THE FISHING VILLAGES OF REGION I

I. INTRODUCTION

The 1990 National Statistics Office data showed that there were 110,529 illiterates or 3.88% of the total population of 2,631,645 of 10 years and above and that the literacy rate of Region I was 95.80. The data also showed that there were more female illiterates (66,504) than male (44,025). Furthermore, the functional literacy rate of the Region was 71.70% for both sexes with 72.30% for male and 71.30% for female.

The implementation of Education for All in Region I particularly for Eradication of Illiteracy and continuing Education for Development was focused on women in order to address to the gender issue on development. It is on this premise that the Nonformal Education Division of DECS Region I implemented the project "Community Learning Approach (CLA) for Literacy Promotion of Women in the Fishing Villages of Region I."

The project was conceived after a thorough analysis of the NSO data conducted by the NFED supervisory staff which showed that there was high incidence of illiteracy among women in the municipalities located in the coastal areas. To validate the data, three fishing villages were surveyed located in Sto. Tomas, La Union and the salient findings are as follows:

a) The 429 families covered in the survey have a total of 1,422 children with age range of below one year old to 45 years;
b) Five hundred thirty eight of the children are in elementary school, 131 high school and 27 in colleges;
c) The Educational status of the children revealed that 189 dropped out from the elementary school, 155 from high school and 49 from college, and
d) The educational attainment of the heads of families are as follows; 29 finished primary grades, 211 finished intermediate, 107 finished high school; 32 undergraduate in college, 22 college graduates, 3 vocational education grades while 7 did not go to school.

The results of the survey in the barangays indicate low educational attainment of the people due to many dropouts in the three levels of

education. Undertaking this project is very significant and timely because it is in line with the DECS' program thrust of providing equity in education and in support of UNESCO's Asia Pacific Program of Education for All (APPEAL).

This project has its ultimate objective, the improvement of the quality of life of the people in the said villages through literacy program.

With the financial assistance of the Bureau of Nonformal Education in the amount of P200,00. twenty four (24) barangays were reached during the initial stage of implementation.

As an alternative delivery system of educating women in the fishing villages for functional literacy and to organize themselves for empowerment to undertake livelihood projects, as a way of augmenting their income, the components of the project are: 1) assessment of the clientele on their socio-economic status; 2) development/ production and translation of literacy instructional materials; 3) recruitment and training of functional literacy facilitators; 4) organization and conduct of functional literacy classes; 5) livelihood skills training; 6) organization for community development; and 7) monitoring and evaluation.

The initial assessment of the target barangays conducted by the District Nonformal Education Coordinators and Literacy Facilitators, have surfaced some problems such as prevalence of malnourished children, poor environmental sanitation, rampant vices especially gambling among women and high drop-out among school age children.

These were the concrete basis for the development plan for the project with the involvement of the local government units, other government agencies and the people themselves.

II. OBJECTIVES

The CLA project is designed to raise the functional literacy level of the clientele that will redound to improved socio-economic status resulting to better quality of life.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Identify the literacy level of the clientele;
2. Assess the socio-economic status of the clientele;
3. Determine the different intervention to address the needs of the clientele;
4. Evaluate existing literacy materials as basis for developing/ enriching instructional materials to be used in the project;
5. Train literacy facilitators in the conduct of functional literacy classes;

6. Conduct functional literacy classes integrating values education;
7. Conduct livelihood skills training based on the needs and interest of the clientele as entry point of the literacy activities;
8. Organize the clientele into association as avenue for their empowerment;
9. Monitor the progress of the project focused on processes and resources management; and
10. Evaluate the impact of the project in terms of efficiency of processes and effectiveness of results.

III. STRATEGIES UNDERTAKEN

1. Assessment of the clientele particularly on their profile i.e. age, sex, educational attainment, occupation, monthly income, number of children.
2. Literacy materials development, production, printing and distribution, based on the curriculum grid focused on the needs and problems of the communities covered.
3. Recruitment and training of functional literacy facilitators who were mostly para-teachers and residents of the target barangays.
4. Organization and conduct of functional literacy classes in coordination with the local government units particularly the barangay council under the leadership of the barangay captain who put up the NFE community learning resources centers.
5. Livelihood skills training which were based on the needs and interests of the clientele as entry point for the functional literacy activities, wherein some LGU's had given financial assistance for the learning materials needed by the clientele.
6. Organization for community development where the clientele were organized into an association some of whom were accredited by other agencies for financial assistance.
7. Monitoring and evaluation was done periodically and the results were the basis of expanding the project and further training of implementors.

Community Assemblies were also conducted in consultation with the LGU to give feedback of the project and to foster the support of the people especially during the graduation of the clientele.

To enhance and ensure the effective implementation of the CLA project, the following activities based on the project components were undertaken:

1. Conducted a 3-day Workshop for Literacy Teachers on September 27-29, 1990 at RELC, San Vicente, San Fernando, La Union as per Regional Memorandum No. 1, s. 1990;

2. Held Literacy Instructional Materials Fair (LIMFAIR) at the DECS Regional Office Library on February 26, 1991 as per Regional memorandum No. 16, s. 1991 as basis for the development/ enrichment of literacy materials;
3. Conducted a Two-Day Training of Para-Literacy teachers on Literacy Promotion in the Fishing Villages in Region I on June 20-21, 1991 at FTC-RELC, DECS Regional Office;
4. Conducted a 3-Day Training-Workshop for literacy teachers assigned in the 24 fishing villages concerned in the CLA Project on September 24-26, 1991 at RELC as per Regional Memorandum No. 103, s. 1991;
5. Conducted a Two-Day Mid-Project Evaluation and Planning Conference of the CLA for literacy Promotion in Fishing Villages of Region on January 14-15, 1992 at RELC as per Regional Memorandum No. 13, s. 1992;
6. Conducted a Two-Day Consultative Conference on NFE-CLA Functional Literacy Project on May 6-7, 1992 at FTC, DECS RO I, SFLU;
7. Conducted a 3-Day Regional Seminar-Workshop on the NFE Community Learning Approach at RELC on September 15-17, 1993. This was focused on the evaluation of the project as well as expansion to DDU barangays;
8. Evaluation of the CLA Projects pursuant to Regional Memorandum No. 6, s. 1994; and
9. Conducted Literacy Post Test using the FLEMMS instruments translated to Ilocano and Pangasinan languages.

IV. INITIAL RESULT OF THE PROJECT

A. Assessment

The assessment of the clientele in the initial phase as shown in Annexes A-G covering 24 barangays showed that there were 651 beneficiaries of the project who were mostly in the productive age 21-40 years composed of 439 adults and 212 out of school youths.

On their educational attainment, 188 dropped out during their primary grades while 373 dropped out when they were in the intermediate grades. If not reached for the literacy classes, these women will definitely revert to illiteracy.

In line with the occupation of the clientele, more than one half are housekeepers and fish vendors and the average monthly income with 6 children to support is P1,500. This showed their extreme poverty. It was also found out that poor environmental sanitation prevailed due to absence of sanitary toilets. Furthermore, there was a

high percentage of malnourished children due to limited food supply. Rampant gambling among the folks such as bingo and card playing was also observed especially after fish vending and there were no organization of the people. The mothers did not mind whether their children go to school or not and that majority of them were poorly groomed and most often idle.

B. Intervention Undertaken

Advocacy and social mobilization were done in the 24 barangays with the active involvement and assistance of the local government units and other agencies. This was strengthened by a series of community assemblies involving all the beneficiaries of the project where the results of the baseline survey were presented.

Recruitment of clientele and organization of literacy classes followed and the first lessons were focused on environmental sanitation which were popularly clamored by the clientele themselves. These activities were spearheaded by the rural health units and the LGUs under the coordination of the DECS, district and school levels. This resulted to the putting-up of sanitary toilets where most families were given toilet bowls by the Department of Health.

Meanwhile, the literacy classes were conducted where the functional content of the lessons were on health and sanitation, family life, child care, nutrition and food preparation and food production. The literacy materials used were developed through a workshop conducted in the Region and they were written in Ilocano and Pangasinan languages. While the beneficiaries were learning to read and write and develop numeracy skills, they have internalized concepts on family life, with five lessons; health and environmental sanitation composed of five lessons; nutrition with two lessons; organization of cooperatives with one lesson; and income-generating project and citizenship training with three lessons.

Due to continuous monitoring and advocacy, information education and communication particularly with the local government units, the barangay council put up community learning centers where the classes were conducted.

The youth organizations through the Sangguniang Kabataan, also became involved and spearheaded cleanliness and beautification campaign which resulted in the total improvement of the community. Vegetable gardens, hedges along the streets and community playground were put-up.

Livelihood skills training like hair science and dressmaking were implemented using the financial assistance of the Bureau of Nonformal Education (BNFE) which were also augmented by Local Government Units.

During the graduation of the beneficiaries, almost one-half of them have their own livelihood projects like dressmaking, quilted bag making, snack preparation, and buying and selling. It was also noticed that the women-beneficiaries became better-groomed including their children.

V. EXPANSION OF THE PROJECT

From 1992 to 1993, the project was expanded reaching a total of 2,273 beneficiaries composed of 925 out-of-school youth and 1,848 unemployed adults in 79 barangays located in 47 municipalities. The same strategies were adopted in the first year of implementation.

To date, the livelihood projects of the clientele which were given seed capital of P1,00 per barangay for Phase I, Phase II; and P2,000 per barangay for Phase III have been going on in some villages while some members who are no longer participating in the livelihood projects of the group went on their own business ventures such as dressmaking and beauty shops, sari-sari storekeeping and food vending. One Singer sewing machine was given to a pilot barangay in each school division; 1 set-hair science kit was given per barangay for training purposes adopting the concept of "Earning while Learning."

After 4 years of implementation, the Nonformal Education Division in coordination with the schools division offices headed by the Schools Division superintendents, Assistant Schools Division Superintendents In Charge of nonformal Education and ESI, NFE, functional literacy post tests were conducted using the FLEMMS instrument. There were 712 representing 30% of the total beneficiaries tested and the results of this functional literacy test are shown below:

Division	Number of Clientele Testes	Number of Literate Clientele	Number of Functionally Literate Clientele	Percentage of Functionally Literate Clientele
Ilocos Norte	130	130	121	93%
Ilocos Sur	115	115	112	97%
La Union	86	86	82	95%
Pangasinan I	200	200	181	91%
Pangasinan II	58	58	56	97%
Dagupan City	63	63	80	95%
Laoag City	60	60	60	100%
TOTAL	712	712	672	94%

A complementary instrument which was in the form of another questionnaire was also administered to find out how the CLA clientele helped their children especially those studying in the elementary school. Other important items like what they have learned in the training and what are those they apply in their homes were also asked. The clientele wrote in their dialect their answers and the findings are the following:

1. Home beautification and cleanliness
2. Sewing the dresses of their children
3. Teaching their children the different values like love of God, helpfulness, industry, cleanliness, respect for elders, discipline
4. Home food production
5. Personal grooming
6. Cooking nutritious foods

What is very satisfying is that most of the clientele expressed their need for further training in dressmaking, tailoring, crocheting, broom making, embroidery, cosmetology, how to organize cooperatives and entrepreneurship training.

These concerns of the clientele are now the basis for expanding the training if only to make them more productive. The expansion of the CLA project is included in the 1997 NFE Program for the Region and with stronger advocacy, SOCMOB-IEC, it is expected that the LGU's will give their full support.

V. CONCLUSION

The CLA project of Region I is one example of a community-based functional literacy project, where the beneficiaries are involved in all the phases of implementation/

In as much as the community people are the constituents of the local government units, it is imperative that their support and assistance should be sustained through strong advocacy.

Literacy program as a mandate of the DECS which is an integral part of Basic Education should not only address to the concern of equity education but also the provision of quality education. Hence, before the year 2000, it is envisioned that some of the beneficiaries will be given the chance to pursue higher education through equivalency program, a great challenge ahead!

ANNEX A

NUMBER OF CLIENTELE REACHED IN CLA PHASE I

DIVISION	OSY	ADULT	TOTAL
Ilocos Norte	42	43	85
Ilocos Sur	4	101	105
La Union	38	99	137
Pangasinan I	62	151	213
Pangasinan II	0	42	42
Dagupan City	9	60	69
TOTAL	155	496	651

ANNEX B

PROFILE OF CLA CLIENTELE IN TERMS OF AGES

AGE IN YEARS	OSY	ADULT	TOTAL
10 - 14	2	0	2
15 - 20	68	0	68
21 - 25	85	0	85
26 - 30	0	123	123
31 - 35	0	109	109
36 - 40	0	72	72
41 - 45	0	81	81
46 - 50	0	72	72
51 and above	0	39	39
TOTAL	155	496	651

ANNEX C

PROFILE OF CLIENTELE IN TERMS OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

ATTAINMENT	NUMBER OF CLIENTELE			PERCENTAGE
	OSY	ADULT	TOTAL	
No schooling	1	1	2	0.31%
Grade I	1	6	7	1.08%
Grade II	8	12	20	3.07%
Grade III	24	44	68	10.45%
Grade IV	38	55	93	14.29%
Grade V	30	75	105	16.13%
Grade VI	42	226	268	41.17%
High School Dropout	10	66	76	11.67%
College Dropout	1	11	12	1.84%
TOTAL	52	496	651	100.00%

ANNEX D

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME OF CLA CLIENTELE

	TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTELE	PERCENTAGE
P 1,000 - below	256	39.32%
1,001 - 1,500	208	31.95%
1,501 - 2,000	89	13.67%
2,001 - 2,500	25	3.84%
2,501 - 3,000	3	0.46%
3,001 - above	3	0.46%
No fixed income	67	10.29%
TOTAL	651	100.00%

ANNEX E

NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF CLA CLIENTELE

NUMBER	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1 - 2 children	142	21.81%
3 - 4 children	207	31.80%
5 - 6 children	133	20.43%
7 - 8 children	52	7.99%
9 - 10 children	9	1.38%
11 and above	2	0.31%
none (clientele are single)	105	16.13%
TOTAL	651	100.00%

ANNEX F

AGE OF THE CHILDREN OF CLA CLIENTELE

OSY	PERCENTAGE	AGE IN YEARS	ADULTS	PERCENTAGE
217	23.23%	0 - 6	191	10.45%
286	30.63%	7 - 12	283	30.29%
197	21.09%	13 - 16	192	20.55%
120	12.85%	17 - 21	145	15.53%
114	12.20%	22 and above	123	13.18%

ANNEX G

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF THE CHILDREN OF CLA CLIENTELE

ATTAINMENT	NUMBER OF CHILDREN			PERCENTAGE
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	
Pre-school	112	126	238	12.74%
Primary	182	205	387	20.72%
Intermediate	178	172	350	18.74%
High School	130	113	243	13.01%
College	33	21	54	2.89%
Dropout: Primary	17	19	36	1.93%
Intermediate	76	50	126	6.75%
High School	85	103	188	10.06%
College	23	13	36	1.93%
Not in school (pre-school age)	98	112	210	11.24%
TOTAL	934	934	1,868	100.00%